

# **MEETING LEARNING NEEDS OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPs) IN CRISIS – AFFECTED NORTHEAST NIGERIA**

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## INTRODUCTION

- ❑ Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are persons who are forced to leave their homes/places of habitual residence to avoid the effect of armed conflict/crisis/violence/violations of human rights, natural or man-made disasters and who may have not crossed internally recognised borders.
- ❑ Armed crisis, insurgency, conflict, persecution, violence, disaster either man made or natural are the major causes of panic, trauma, loss of lives and property which make people to flee from their homes to find safety and live elsewhere.
- ❑ This has been the case in Northeast Nigeria since 2009.

# Crisis-affected Northeast Nigeria

- ❑ Insurgency, violence, political insecurity and religious crisis erupted in Northeast Nigeria by Boko Haram sect in 2009 and have left deep scars for the people who have been forcibly displaced.
- ❑ Between 2009 and 2015, attacks in Northeast Nigeria destroyed more than 910 schools and forced at least 1500 to be closed. By early 2016, an estimated 952,029 school-aged children had fled the violence, with little or no access to education.
- ❑ According to the 2020 report of United Nations High Commission for Refugees, 2.4 million people were displaced as a result of the Boko Haram crisis in the region.
- ❑ In the Northeast, poverty rates, economic growth, literacy rate, youth unemployment and other core socioeconomic indicators trail behind compared with the rest of the country because of the conflict and insecurity in the region.
- ❑ Data shows literacy rates for north-east Nigeria at 50.5 per cent for boys and 31.8 per cent for girls. (UNICEF). In addition, a major concern for the country is the large population of unskilled, economically unproductive, unhealthy, and poorly educated youth in the region. (<https://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/Country-Profiles/NGA.pdf>)

## LEARNING NEEDS OF IDPs

- ❑ The basic learning needs of IDPs include the abilities of reading, writing, oral expression, numeracy, problem solving, and the knowledge of skills, values and attitudes required by adults and youths to function and survive in their divergent sociocultural contexts.
- ❑ Apart from literacy skills, an important need of adult and young IDPs is vocational skills for economic empowerment and improved livelihoods. Having been displaced from their communities, some of them lost their sources of income, which in many instances was trading, because they had no sustainable vocational skills.
- ❑ IDPs also need psychosocial support for long term recovery.
- ❑ In addition, IDPs require education in strengthening their resilience to the threats of violent extremism and empowering them to become active supporters of peace and non-violence.

# Meeting the Learning Needs of IDPs

- The Adult & Non-formal Education Agency (ANFEA) in Gombe State, in line with its mandate conducts literacy classes and vocational skill acquisition programmes for adult and youth learners in the non-formal sector.
- In view of the State's policy of integration of IDPs within host communities, the IDPs are also integrated in the programmes organized in the host communities. However, some initiatives are largely targeted at IDPs.
- The Agency has also engaged in training of NFE facilitators to deliver conflict sensitive instruction by upgrading their skills, establishing teacher learning circles and through mentoring.
- Furthermore, the Agency is collaborating with the Ministry of Women Affairs and relevant CSOs to provide psychosocial support for IDP learners.

# Key Initiatives to meet learning needs of IDPs

- The State Agency for Adult & Non-formal Education has received support from development partners through three key initiatives. They are:
  1. Education Crisis Response for IDPs Project in Northeast Nigeria
  2. Empowerment of Women and Girls in Marginalized Communities for Better Well-Being through Education and Advocacy (2021 – 2022)
  3. Strengthening Peacebuilding and Resilience in Northeast Nigeria through Education, Economic Empowerment and Social Change (2023-date)
- Because of time constraint, I will focus on two of these initiatives.

# 1<sup>st</sup> Initiative: Education Crisis Response for IDPs Project

- The project was supported by USAID and it was implemented in five Northeastern States namely Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe and Yobe.
- The main objective was to support recovery of the education system from the trauma caused by the Boko Haram insurgency.
- Literacy centres were established where participants received literacy lessons as well as sessions on social emotional learning.
- **Results:** In Gombe state, 310 centres were established; 16,026 were enrolled. 47% Male, 53% Female and (Physically challenged learners 0.8).
- Of the number of learners enrolled, 90% graduated.
- 32% of enrolled learners were mainstreamed into the formal school/post literacy NFE centres after graduation.
- This success was recorded in all the other four states where the project was implemented.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Initiative: Strengthening Peacebuilding and Resilience in Northeast Nigeria through Education, Economic Empowerment and Social Change

- This is an ongoing project which we are implementing with the technical support of UNESCO and with funding provided by the Japan Government.
- The overall objective of the Japan-UNESCO project is to contribute to deradicalization and support peacebuilding in Gombe state through education, economic empowerment, and improved community-based efforts.
- The project is supporting IDPs particularly youth, women and girls, with experiential learning for peacebuilding, psychosocial support for long-term recovery, and opportunities for socio-economic empowerment.
- Through the project, safe spaces have been established within communities in six selected LGAs for the IDPs, including women and other vulnerable groups, to participate in experiential learning activities.
- The IDPs are receiving psychosocial support through counselling, sport and creative art to address and prevent psychological distress arising from their traumatic displacement.
- In addition, they have been enrolled in skill acquisition centres to build their vocational skills towards strengthening their livelihoods. Some of the vocational skills include tailoring, poultry farming, animal husbandry, catering, shoe making, etc.
- The children and young IDPs of school age have been mainstreamed into formal schooling, while the illiterate youth and adults participate in literacy lessons.



# Conclusion

- The Gombe state Adult & Non-formal Education Agency (ANFEA) would like to appreciate partners like UNESCO for supporting its efforts in meeting the learning needs of IDPs in the state.
- The initiatives have been very successful in providing the needed support for the IDPs.
- Thank you for listening.